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adds greatly to the clarity, sanity, and helpfulness of his treatment of educational questions. One cannot help wondering then why he does not see that the work in child-study which he ridicules has already produced profound changes in the theory of American education, and also in its practice in many sections of the country. That movement has set in operation forces which are transforming American schools in respect to the actual processes of teaching. Of course, the movement has not much influenced the administration of education, as Mr. Draper has been interested in it. It has had to deal with minute details, wherein lie the real secrets of success in teaching. To one who is dealing with matters in a big way, this minute work seems trivial. But right here has been the chief trouble with education from Plato down. Men have been unwilling to apply themselves to the detection of those infinitesimal factors which in co-operation lead to success or failure in education. Mr. Draper's treatment of this subject is wholly unsatisfactory, and out of accord with the general spirit and method of his book, which so effectively shows how our present system has come to be what it is.

M. V. O'SHEA

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*Laggards in Our Schools: A Study of Retardation and Elimination in City School Systems.* By LEONARD P. AYRES. New York: Charities Publication Co., 1909. Pp. 120. \$1.50.

This is a book which all school superintendents and principals should have within easy access for ready reference and reading, and it contains many valuable conclusions with which every teacher should be familiar. It is the second of a series of "backward children investigations" published by the Russell Sage Foundation, which undertook in the fall of 1907 to study "the adaptability of the school and its grades to children." The predominant interest of the investigation "was not in the individual, subnormal, or atypical child, but rather in the large class, varying with local conditions from 5 to 75 per cent. of all the children in our schools, who are older than they should be for the grades they are in." The object was to answer the questions, "How many of the children in our schools fail to make normal progress from grade to grade, and why do they fail? How many of the children drop out of school before finishing the elementary course, and why do they drop out? What are the facts and what are the remedies?" This present volume discusses these questions under the general headings: (1) "Conditions," (2) "Causes," and (3) "Remedies."

The subjects discussed under "Conditions" are retardation—"retarded children are those who are older than they should be for the grades in which they are found"—and elimination—"the falling out of children before completing the course." Chap. ii calls attention to the significance of these problems and gives in general the method of studying the relative distribution of the 1,982,477 children enrolled in the public schools of fifty-eight cities of the United States.

Chap. iii discusses factors affecting grade distribution. Allowing for the

factors of death and increase in numbers of each succeeding generation, it is estimated that for every 871 eighth-grade pupils there would be 1,000 first-grade or seven-year-old pupils. Some other factors affecting the distribution are local conditions, such as the existence of a floating population, with transference of pupils, and immigration. The factor of elimination is important, and the conclusion is reached, "In the elementary school 10 per cent. of the children will have left at thirteen years of age, 40 per cent. will have left by fourteen, half of the remainder at fifteen, and again half of these at the age of sixteen." The general tendency for our schools is to carry all of the children through the fifth grade and about one-tenth through the high school, as is shown later.

The difficult problem of the extent of retardation in different systems of schools is taken up in chap. iv. Attention is called to the work of Dr. Cornman and Dr. Falkner. Dr. Greenwood's criticism of Dr. Cornman's method of computing retardation by the age and grade figures is also discussed. This is the method adopted, modified, and expanded in the book under discussion, because for one reason the data for the method proposed by Mr. Greenwood—"the time it takes to do a year's work"—were not available. Using the city of Memphis as an example, and accepting as "normal ages" six to eight years for the first grade, seven to nine for the second, and so on, we find that out of 2,053 children in the first grade, 572 or 27.8 per cent. were retarded; of the 392 in the eighth grade, 193 or 49.2 per cent. were retarded; or, for this city-school system of eight grades, 51.3 per cent. of the pupils were retarded. The colored children (apparently for all grades) showed 75.8 per cent. retarded. If we neglect the effect of the time of year when the statistics were gathered, Medford heads the list with only 7.5 per cent. retarded; Boston is listed with 18.5 per cent., Philadelphia with 36.8 per cent., Los Angeles with 38.3 per cent., etc., the average for thirty-one cities being 33.7 per cent.

"What proportion of the children who enter the first grade continue to the eighth?" This is the question discussed in chap. v. The first important problem is, how many children enter the first grade, for the number in the first grade is not the number of beginners. "It contains those who entered this year and all the retarded pupils." So also does the second grade, the third, and so on. How may we find the number of beginners? This is Mr. Ayres's question. His answer is as follows: "The number of children beginning school each year is approximately equal to the average of the generations of the ages seven to twelve in the school membership of the system." The first grade has on an average a membership of 173 per cent. of the annual number of beginners.

Chap. vi discusses the wide variance between the above results and those given in the statistical report of the Bureau of Education, especially the report of Professor Thorndike, whose computations are however based on a study of several cities not included in Mr. Ayres's report. Chap. vii takes up the rate of progress, and maintains that for the average child it requires ten years to pass through the eight grades of the average city-school system, and that from "available data it appears safe to say that for every pupil making rapid progress there are from eight to ten making slow progress."

The pupil who repeats the school year is called "a repeater." Chap. viii discusses the money cost of the repeater. Chap. ix again calls attention to the causes of leaving school, referring to work, ill health, etc. Chap. x,

on the nationality factor, says: "There is no evidence that cities having the largest foreign population have the highest percentages of retardation and elimination."

Physical defects and school progress are discussed in chap. xi, which is full of instructive and suggestive material. "Physical defects decrease with age. . . . Vision does not follow the same general rule as other defects. . . . New York examinations show higher percentages of enlarged glands, defective breathing, hypertrophied tonsils, and adenoids among dull children than among bright children."

The next three chapters are concerned with irregular attendance, promotions, the sex factor, and age. The conclusions here are, "Retardation among boys is 13 per cent. more prevalent than among girls," and therefore "our schools as they now exist are better fitted to the needs and natures of the girl than of the boy pupils. . . . Children who make the most rapid progress through the grades are those who start late, and those who make the slowest progress are those who start early."

Some rather meager statistics are given in chap. xvi to show that the conditions are improving, and a comparative method of testing the efficiency of public schools is outlined in chap. xvii. Under chap. xviii we have a brief discussion of compulsory attendance, school census, grading, special classes, physical defects, transfers, and promotions. That our schools are weakest upon the administrative side is shown in chap. xix. The final chapter calls attention to the effect of retardation on society.

This book contains the results of much research and shows evidence of a comprehensive knowledge of statistical methods. It is essential for the reader to keep in mind that the author is "outlining problems, testing methods, and developing a system of more extensive work" by using such material as is available from present records and reports, and that consequently some of the problems are treated in a general manner, though the book is in no sense a popular treatise.

On the other hand, it does not seem unfair to say that the reader is surprised to find that no consideration is made for the wide range of requirements in regard to compulsory school attendance and frequency of promotions, that a careful distinction is not always made between retarded pupils and repeaters (cf. pp. 26, 27), and that occasionally certain tentative conclusions which have been drawn for a special purpose are at other times accepted as general conclusions. For example in chap. iv, where statistics on retardation are gathered from thirty-one cities, the time at which they were gathered varies greatly and would greatly modify results. The author then states, "Retardation figures from the different cities are only comparable when based on figures gathered by the same method." Comparative percentages follow. These are used as general conclusions at the end of the chapter, and also on p. 3. (These conclusions have been stated at the end of the fourth paragraph of this review.)

Dr. Luther H. Gulick, under whose direction the report was published, states in the Introduction that the most important results of the backward children investigation, of which this is the second report, are: "(1) that the most important causes of retardation of school children can be removed; (2) that the old-fashioned virtues of regularity of attendance and faithfulness are major

elements of success; (3) that some cities are already accomplishing excellent results by measures that can be adopted by all; (4) that relatively few children are so defective as to prevent success in school or life."

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BIRD T. BALDWIN

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*The Syntax of High-School Latin: Statistics and Selected Examples Arranged under Grammatical Headings and in Order of Occurrence* by Fifty Collaborators. Edited by LEE BYRNE. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1909. Pp. ix+54. \$0.83 postpaid.

In this book Mr. Byrne, with the help of a large number of collaborators, has endeavored to count and tabulate for each book or oration every construction occurring in the average high-school Latin, covering the same field as Mr. Lodge in his *Vocabulary of High-School Latin*, except that (wisely, in my judgment), he includes only four books of Caesar, not five. Statistics are given, notes on categories, a proposed distribution in the course of study, selected examples for each construction, and the same examples in the order of their occurrence—and all this in the brief compass of fifty-four pages. In the exhibition of the examples, Mr. Byrne, following the general style of Mr. Lodge's treatment, has put into bold-faced type the constructions occurring as many as five times in Caesar, into ordinary type those additional constructions which occur five times in Cicero, and into small capitals the new constructions occurring five times in Virgil. The purpose of the whole is to suggest to teachers a reasonable reduction, through the omission of rare constructions, in the total number dwelt upon in high-school work, and an order in which emphasis shall be laid upon those which are taken up. The editor rightly thinks that completeness in the high school may go too far, and defeat its own ends. The spirit of the whole is summed up in the Introduction, in a sentence taken from President Butler: "Details relatively of little value, save in so far as these are absolutely necessary to enable the student to read intelligently, are out of place in secondary education."

The plan is altogether admirable.<sup>1</sup> The book should be in the hands of all teachers, and especially of college instructors who make examination papers in translation, composition, or grammar.

But I do not regard the work as final. Too many persons have been engaged upon it to allow a strictly uniform system to be possible. Moreover, it is too condensed. It does not seem to me wise, for example, to include the

<sup>1</sup>I appreciate it all the more, because some of the younger scholars connected with my work were engaged upon a similar plan, in which I was taking part. So, more notably, Mr. W. L. Carr, formerly of the Shortridge High School, Indianapolis, now of the University High School, The University of Chicago, whose name appears frequently under the mention of the individual subjects in Mr. Bryne's preface, and Miss Frances E. Sabin, of the High School at Oak Park, Ill., who, when a graduate student at the University of Chicago, eight years ago prepared a complete classification of all the subjunctives in the seven books of the *Gallic War*, on the basis of the Hale-Buck syntax, giving all the examples in full.